

WAS MAN MADE?

BY THE REVEREND IAN GILLMAN, PROFESSOR AT EMMANUEL COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND

JUST over thirty years ago I purchased a book concerned with man's understanding of himself.

That in itself was not unusual, but what was unusual was the contents. This book, the work of a noted medical research scientist, made me in the community. At first time many people were aware of the fact that there was a great deal which the world in which we lived, and of the universe's beyond, were relatively unknown to himself.

Indeed this had so impressed Alexis Carrel, the author, that he had entitled his book, *Man the Unknown*.

Some of the gaps noted by Carrel have been filled in over the past thirty years, although man's investigations of the natural order have not slackened, rather the opposite has been the case.

We know now the nature of the basic stuff out of which living matter is made, and the DNA molecule and nucleic acid are the secrets from us now.

But still man remains sufficient of a mystery to drive the computer programmer to distraction, to destroy the overly neat hypotheses of psychologists and to upset the predictions of economists.

Each time this happens the blame is assigned to what is called, quite significantly, *the human factor*. And this human factor is an unpredictable, impendable, matched only by sheer caprice, not to say by the vagaries of the weather.

Yet "What is Man?" is in itself a crucial question. There are answers proffered to it, and each one has long term effects for man and for the society he lives in. We have only to think of the results in science on our own time of such answers as—

● Man is a productive unit in the economic structure.

● Man is a unit in the master-slave dialectic to rule over all lesser peoples.

● Man is a unit of power in the revolutionary class struggle.

● Man is the rationally evolved peak of an age long evolutionary process.

SCRIPTURAL VIEW

Over against much of this stands the view of man held by the Scriptures. Indeed the very question is borrowed from Psalm 139. The psalmist answers in terms of man's concurrent puniness

Man is as nothing alongside the majesty of the heavens but is yet as being made a little less than God, with dominion made God over all creation.

This answer, brief and to the point, is spread in the creation stories of the drama of Eden

In Genesis 1:26. There it is clear that man is a creature dependent on God. If that be so, he might rise from the dust, to become human (Adam) rather than remain hominid (adamah).

● Cannot be understood outside of this relationship of dependence from God. Always lacks fulfillment. We are reminded of the words of the greatest thinkers.

Augustine's words remind us that "Our hearts are restless, till they find their rest in Thee" and John Calvin remarks that "man never achieves a clear knowledge of himself unless he has first looked upon God's face."

● Mirrors this necessary dependence upon God by interdependence with woman in his earthly existence — in that she only finds earthly completeness when with man he becomes "one flesh."

● Is made in "the image and likeness of God."

● It does not fall within my task to describe how this idyllic state is ruined, nor how it is restored.

I need say only that it is clear that man is only willing to admit dependence in emergencies, is proud of standing on his own feet, never acknowledging his own need for God.

UNIT Y TAKES LEAVE MUCH UNRESOLVED

ANGELICAN NEWS SERVICE

The report published on March 25 on Anglican-Presbyterian conversations details the work carried out by four panels appointed by the Church of Scotland, the Presbyterian Church of England, the Episcopal Church of Scotland.

It is "The Anglican-Presbyterian Conversations," jointly published by S.P.C.K. and the Scottish Church Council, at six shillings sterling.

After four years, in which 150 people, both ministerial and lay, have been engaged, the report has been produced and described as "a vital document for the churches which the churches in Britain are seeking the way towards unity."

Although the goal of the discussions was a united church of the English and Scottish churches in Scotland in full communion with each other, the producers of the report make it plain that the document is not a mediator solution to the problems and difficulties.

They go no further than saying that they show how these can be honestly faced in the present situation and eventually, by charity and sacrifice, overcome.

The report is by way of being an interim one remitted to the churches with the hope that each will commend it for study among its members.

While there is undoubtedly a broad basis of agreement within the churches, it is equally clear that many questions are still unresolved in the minds of many of its members.

These include the meaning of unity as distinct from uniformity and even more, what means

likeness of God, in that he is able to respond to God and is responsible to God.

Alone of all the creatures he is in dialogue with God and rules for God as he names, and to sets limits to, all the creatures.

As the mediating manager between God and creation there are important consequences for creation when man rejects God's authority.

It is called to stand before God in trust and obedience, as does a child with his parents. As a child takes a toy to play with, so man should be able to take all creation to God.

IDYLIC STATE

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London, April 11

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ECUMENICAL PRESS SERVICE

New York, April 11

Dr Charles Clayton Morrison, who during his 39 years as owner and editor of *The Christian Century* made it the most influential Protestant journal of opinion in the United States and invited members of the ecumenical and liberal causes, has died in Chicago at the age of 91.

SERMON CRITICISM

ECUMENICAL PRESS SERVICE

Geneva, April 11

A Methodist minister in Chester, England, has invited communists to criticise his sermons.

Each Sunday the Reverend David Bridges asks his congregations to remain after the vital part of service and say what they really think about his preaching.

He introduced the practice because he thought "clergymen are in a bad way of accepting criticism and now has invited members of the ecumenical and liberal causes, has died in Chicago at the age of 91.

AIMS OF NEW ANGELICAN CENTRE DESCRIBED

ANGELICAN NEWS SERVICE

Rome, April 11

The aims and purposes of the new Anglican centre here were described by the Archbishop of Canterbury in his address at the opening ceremony, during his visit to the Pope, last month.

The centre is in the Palazzo Doria, Via del Corso.

Dr Ramsey said the centre would provide a library of Anglican books to assist people in the study of Anglican theology, spirituality, liturgy and history.

"In this way it will serve the spread of knowledge and understanding which is an essential part of the Ecumenical Movement."

The centre would also be the residence of the representative of the Archbishop of Canterbury at the Catholic University of Rome.

Since before the opening of the Second Vatican Council the archbishop had had such a representative, and the continuance of this plan would enable valuable contacts between the Anglican communion and the Roman Catholic Church.

"The centre will be a place where Christians of different traditions can meet and come to know one another, and share their personal knowledge and understanding which is an essential part of the Ecumenical Movement."

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